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No. 364

Hooverizing Internationale

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY

REBECCA P. ABRAHAMSON

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NEW YORK
SAMUEL FRENCH

PUBLISHER
28-30 WEST 38TH STREET

LONDON
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TMP92-008538

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HOOVERIZING INTERNATIONALLE

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MRS. DOOLITTLE.....	<i>A young housekeeper</i>
MRS. NEEDLESS.....	<i>Her intimate friend</i>
CELESTE.....	<i>A maid of resources</i>
NORA O'SHAUNOSSY.....	<i>Who discharges herself</i>
INGEBOG CHRISTIANA JANNSEN....	<i>A belligerent ap- plicant</i>
GRETCHEN SCHLANGENHEIMER....	<i>Willing to meet circumstances</i>
MRS. SHORTLY.....	<i>Policewoman</i>
MRS. THOROUGHLY.....	<i>Policewoman</i>
SING YOUNG.....	<i>A patriot of value</i>
MIRANDA STONEWALL JACKSON....	<i>With a touch of the Southland</i>

SCENE: *Mrs. Doolittle's Apartment*

TIME: *Present Era of the Great War,*

Hooverizing Internationale

SCENE: *Mrs. Doolittle's living-room; a handsomely furnished interior. A wide arch opening on the R. Door on the L. Window c. All draped. Interior backing at doors. Exterior, sky line backing, at window. Table c. Chair R. of table. Chair L. of table. Settee down-stage, R. of c. Desk, with telephone, on the L. against the wall, below door. Light chair at desk. Push button on wall at lower end of R. opening. Add additional furniture to dress the background, but do not crowd.*

AT RISE: *Mrs. Doolittle is seated L. of table c. She is handsomely dressed in morning attire, cap, and slippers; she has a small knitting bag in her lap and is knitting in pink silk.*

(CELESTE, the French maid, speaks outside R. door.)

CELESTE. (*Speaking outside R.*) My mistress is here, Madame—if you are so kind to come up.

(MRS. DOOLITTLE, catching the words, hastily and in some impatience, tucks her knitting into bag, drawing out army work—gray scarf.)

MRS. NEEDLESS. (*Replying to CELESTE outside R.*) Thank you my dear! MRS. DOOLITTLE rises and advances a step, facing R. Enter MRS. NEED-

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LESS from R. MRS. NEEDLESS *greets her in gushing fashion*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Violet! how sweet of you to drop in so early, my dear! Do sit down and keep me company.

MRS. NEEDLESS. Just for a moment, darling. (*Advancing to chair at R. of table, and leaving a small fancy fruit basket she carries, on table*) You must be busy with such a large dinner party on for to-night.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Never too busy to see you, dear Violet! (*Returning to her seat at L. of table*)

MRS. NEEDLESS. What courage you have to entertain on such a large scale, even on Thanksgiving—and everything so high! (*Seating herself R. of table*) But, as I said to Franklin when we received your invitation, “No wonder Claudie gives these lavish dinner parties. Rutherford supplies her with a most generous housekeeping allowance. No Hooverizing there!” (*MRS. DOOLITTLE laughs, pleased, continuing to knit*) My dear—(*Leaning forward eagerly*) Do you know what Franklin answered me? (*MRS. DOOLITTLE pauses, looking at her. Continuing, after dramatic pause*) Well, I’ve made up my mind I’ll tell you! Franklin said that Rutherford has been getting such tips lately, on the stock market, that he could afford to give you anything within reason. And I said—(*Pause, then rattling on*)—I said—“If Claudia Doolittle knows of any tips on the market—anything sure to make a lot of money, why, she’ll tell us, because these are war times, and everybody wants to help everyone else, don’t they?” That’s the right spirit—(*Coaxingly*) patriotic, isn’t it, darling—to pass along anything helpful, and tips are helpful, aren’t they? And Franklin said, maybe you’d be close-mouthed about it—the market, but I said—“I know Claudia isn’t that kind—she never was when we were girls—she’ll

be only too anxious to help us along and do her 'bit'." I knew you would, darling.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Earnestly*) Really Violet, the way you put it, makes one feel like a slacker! (*Looking at MRS. NEEDLESS, with most amiable innocence*) But do you know, Violet dear, Rutherford doesn't tell me a thing about business! He jokes about it—says what I don't know, I can't tell! (*Light laugh*)

MRS. NEEDLESS. (*Disappointed*) Oh, does he? I think husbands should tell their wives everything. (*Rising*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*In surprise*) Why, what's your hurry? You just came in?

MRS. NEEDLESS. (*Picking up basket*) I must run along and give cook these before luncheon. (*Her hand on the basket as she moves toward R. door*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Rising, advancing below table*) Do let me see what you have! I just love to get new recipes.

(*MRS. NEEDLESS opens the basket, taking from it a large ripe tomato, and large, green bell pepper.*)

MRS. NEEDLESS. I didn't get much for lunch to-day. There are only the two maids and the chauffeur—for myself, I don't care much—I know when we dine here, there will be an elaborate menu. (*MRS. DOOLITTLE smiles self-consciously*) And for the servants, these will do nicely, combined with spaghetti. (*Putting them back in basket*) It makes a most nourishing and delicious dish for their luncheon and does away with everything else. Do you read the Helpful Housekeeper? No! Oh, my darling, you should! I do—it gives the most useful advice to young housekeepers. One hardly has to use anything, and yet, be constantly and

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correctly well fed. But—(*Indicating* MRS. DOOLITTLE'S *knitting bag*) do let me see your other work before I go.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Well, of course, when I'm out among friends, I always do Red Cross work. (*In some confusion drawing out pink silk work, displaying it*) But here, in the morning, in my own home, in negligee, something intimate seems in better taste. (*Regarding* MRS. NEEDLESS *innocently*) Don't you think so, my dear?

MRS. NEEDLESS. (*Smiling, knowingly, looking at knitting*) The personal touch—it counts so much—I understand, darling. In private, you are knitting powder bags to match all your gowns. Lovely! (*Crossing to R. door*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Must you really go? (*Advancing a step toward* MRS. NEEDLESS)

MRS. NEEDLESS. So sorry, darling—au revoir until this evening. (*Coaxingly*) Do put my Franklin near Rutherford at the table—those helpful hints you know—mean so much in war time—you half promised—

MRS. DOOLITTLE. What are you going to wear?

MRS. NEEDLESS. (*Returning from the door, with enthusiasm*) I've a stunning new gown! Do you know dearest that by Hooverizing—on the servants' meals, and by accepting all the invitations Franklin gets to dine, I have saved enough from my house-keeping allowance to buy a magnificent gown! And you see that is really, a conscientious saving!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I know your dresse is a dream!

MRS. NEEDLESS. It is—it will surprise you, darling. (*Advancing to door again*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I'm wild to see it—

MRS. NEEDLESS. You shall to-night—bye-bye—(*Exit R.*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Good-bye—come early dearest!

MRS. NEEDLESS. (*Outside R.*) I will darling, Bye-bye——

(MRS. DOOLITTLE *stands up c. smiling off R. until the door is heard to close off R. Then her affectionate manner disappears, and a patronizing sneer comes over her face, as she almost turns up her nose after MRS. NEEDLESS' exit.*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. What a miserly creature Violet is—always was in school! Hooverizing for her gowns! How disgusting! I'll wager she won't return my dinner invitation this whole season! Probab'y wait until the war is over and everything is cheap! (*A step toward c. facing L.*)

(*Enter from L. CELESTE, the French maid, in nervous excitement.*)

CELESTE. Oh, Madame, pardon—(*Advancing a step*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Celeste—what is it? (*Advancing down R. of table, to position down R. c.*)

CELESTE. (*Advancing a step down L. of table, in distress*) Madame, as I tell you yesterday—Nora, the cook, is so discontent—and now, she give me notice zat she leave zee very minute!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Dear me! why so, Celeste?

CELESTE. She is, oh, so angry at ze grand dinner party this night—and if she go, no one is there to prepare ze menu.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*With injured air*) This is dreadful—and very ungrateful on Nora's part. I always treated her kindly, and she is a wonderful cook—perhaps it is only a whiff of temper—we must pacify her.

CELESTE. She is not so easy—she scold, stamp foot—(*Stamping her foot*) She say it ees wrong, ze big dinner——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Indignantly*) I am not to be dictated to by my cook——

CELESTE. Ze cook is most always what you call—ze boss! (*Nodding her head firmly*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*A bit nervously*) The dinner is perfectly proper—don't you think so Celeste? (*Dropping into the chair at R. of table*)

CELESTE. (*Advancing a step to L. of table*) Mebbe, Madame, it would be better not to have ze dinner—ze food is scarce—and ze cook is scarce——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. That will do, Celeste—we must go on with our arrangements. Don't you think we can engage another cook?

CELESTE. When I see Nora angry yesterday, I telephone to ze employment agency, and zay say some cooks will come—but not yet have they, Madame——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I could never permit my friends to hear of this embarrassing situation—we must appease Nora—I will promise her something—anything—tell her I want to talk to her——

CELESTE. Oui, Madame—(*Turning briskly to L. door*)

(*Enter from L. door NORA; she looks angry and defiant, and clutches her hat resolutely in one hand, as she slowly advances, her eye on MRS. DOOLITTLE.*)

NORA. I'm here, ma'am——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Sweetly, smiling at NORA*) Come in, Nora——

NORA. I'm in, as fast as I can, to speak for myself! (*Advancing*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. You may go, Celeste. (CELESTE bows and exits L. leaving door open) What is this I hear, Nora? Surely you would not leave us——

NORA. I would! *(Her eye fastened defiantly on Mrs. DOOLITTLE)*

MRS. DOOLITTLE. It is positively wicked to leave us on this day, of all days——

NORA. 'Tis this day, of all days, I'd be afther leavin' ye, to learn ye, and thim like ye, a lesson!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. *(Rising, amazed)* Why, Nora! We always praised your cooking!

NORA. May the Saints forgive me for every meal I cooked for ye!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I cannot understand why you act like this——

NORA. *(Wrathfully)* A bad day it was whin I found this place!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Stop—tell me, quietly, what is the matter?

NORA. *(Wrathfully)* I'll tell ye, but it won't be quiet. When ye ordered all thim ingredients for your dinner party to-night, for the ladies and gintlemen ye invited, and all that food was brought to the kitchen, it struck me here! *(Her heart)* I says, "little it is these rich folks thinks of the starvin' creatures over in the ould country, the ones that's sufferin' in rags this very day, Thanksgiving, and the ones that has nothing to eat!"

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I have often sent large orders for luncheons, teas—you never objected before!

NORA. I did, but it niver struck me so hard as it did to-day—it's on me soul—and I'm done wid yez! *(A step to L.)*

MRS. DOOLITTLE. But Nora, think——

NORA. *(Turning on her wrathfully)* I am thinkin'—I'm doing that very thing as hard as I can. *(Advancing a step)* Yisterday, I signed the pledge——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. The pledge—what pledge?

NORA. To save food, to waste nothin', because it's the dooty of every good Christian to think of

the sufferin' across the sea. 'Twas a real lady that explained it to me at the back door—an' me heart is torn to pieces with the sin I've been committin' day afther day with the everlastin' cookin' for ye, everything ye want, and yez never stoppin' a minute to think of the hunger of the little children over there! (*Weeping*) Oh, warra, warra! I'll never be forgiven!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. That will do, Nora—your howling gets on my nerves! (*Turning in irritation toward R. opening*)

NORA. (*Indignantly, through her tears*) Your nerves is it—bad luck to thim! All ye think of is yourself, eatin' and sleepin'—closin' your eyes an' dreamin' your life away in your foine bird-cage! Beds to sleep in, chairs to sit on—and thim poor creatures in Europe, without a bit of a roof above their heads! Sure, if you don't mend your ways, the divil himself will get you, and it's meself, Nora O'Shaunossy that's tellin' ye, so! (*Advancing toward R. door*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I suppose we cannot persuade you to stay, Nora? (*Ringin bell R.*)

NORA. Ye can't—I say ye can't! (*Clapping her hat angrily on her head, as she crosses to R.*) I'll sind for me trunks, but I'll go first to get the sin off me soul by making a good confession, and—as a penance—(*With determination*) I'll eat no meat, and no bread for seven days. 'Tis yourself should be doin' the same, bad luck to ye! (*Exit R. stormily*)

(*MRS. DOOLITTLE sighing, moves down to R. C. Enter CELESTE from L.*)

CELESTE. You ring, Madame? (*Advancing a step*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (R.) Yes, Nora was very impertinent; so of course I had to let her go.

CELESTE. Zen we will not have ze party to-night?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Severely*) Of course we will have it—we cannot cancel anything so important as a dinner. Have you heard from the employment agency?

CELESTE. Oui, Madame, one cook she arrive already. (*Turning to L. door*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Pleased*) Celeste, you are a treasure—I shall not forget you when Christmas comes. Send the girl in here. (*Seating herself on R. end of settee R. C., knitting on pink silk. Exit CELESTE a second L.*) I don't know how I should ever get along without my dear little Celeste—she is so resourceful, in a crisis.

(*Re-enter CELESTE from L. followed by the Swedish cook, INGEBOG. She carries large knitting bag, with knitting.*)

CELESTE. Zis is ze lady cook, Madame?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Smiling amiably at the girl*) Good-morning.

(*INGEBOG ambles forward awkwardly, while CELESTE exits L. leaving door open.*)

INGEBOG. (*Stolidly*) Fine day! (*Advancing to down C.*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Won't you sit down?

INGEBOG. I t'ink I will. (*She crosses deliberately and seats herself beside MRS. DOOLITTLE, arranging herself comfortably, to MRS. DOOLITTLE's horror as she surrenders the seat*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Standing R.*) I am obliged to engage a cook under rather odd circumstances—I will explain——

(*INGEBOG comfortably seated, takes her knitting from bag.*)

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INGEBOG. I t'ink I don't mind it—I yust listen, und knit for soljiers.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. What is your name?

INGEBOG. Ingebog Christiana Janneson—that is not my full name——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Hastily*) That will do.

INGEBOG. You yust call me Ingebog—easy and simple. (*Knitting*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. My husband is very particular about his cooking——

INGEBOG. What is his name?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*In mild surprise*) The same as mine—Mr. Doolittle——

INGEBOG. H'm—Myster—Do-nothing—yes?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Doolittle!

INGEBOG. Do-little—Do-nothing—yust the same!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Have you good references?

INGEBOG. Das all right, lady—I got plenty reference—ole ones and young ones. (*Slowly, impressively*) But, I yust like to have some references, too, about this place, before I'm coming here to cook.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Indignantly*) Oh, references from *me!* (*Calling*) Celeste!

INGEBOG. I t'ink I am particular!

(*Re-enter CELESTE from L.*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Celeste, I want to satisfy this young lady that she will find this a very agrecab'e place to live—are *you* satisfied?

CELESTE. Madame is most kind—(*Bowing*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*To INGEBOG*) You see? (*Continuing, hurriedly, evasively*) You see how pleased she is! (*With a gesture toward CELESTE, who retires up-stage a step, remaining quietly attentive*) Are you a fancy cook?

INGEBOG. (*Pause in her knitting*) I am not so fancy now. Before war, I am cooking every-

thing yust for the best fine ole families. I don't care how much I am using——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Delighted*) That is splendid! I want you to stay and begin to-night—I am giving a large dinner party——

INGEBOG. Dinner party—(*Rising*) You are mistaking, lady—I would not come here. I belong to the First Methodist Episcopal Church. Our Reverend Olsen preach las' Sunday how we all help win fight—we must Hooverize—that is why I leave my las' place—I sign pledge to save food, I keep that sign—so, that is why I not stay, if Dolittle give dinner party! (*Moving a step toward R. door*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. But you will surely help this time? You see how helpless I am—I will pay you well——

INGEBOG. It pays me better to save—so I feel happy.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*In distress*) But just think of disappointing forty guests!

INGEBOG. I glad you disappoint—forty dinner party is a wicked sin—in Europe there is to-day not food—only a little—you give dinner party, waste food, waste money what starving poor people much need. It is sin! (*Advancing to R. door*) Good-bye, Dolittle—I tell employment lady—you get no more Swedish cook—because no Hooverize. (*Exit R.*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Half tearfully*) Oh, Celeste, what shall I do? Can't we hire anyone?

CELESTE. (*Advancing a step*) Madame, please do not have ze party!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Indignantly*). I will have it! Anyone would think I am committing a crime!

CELESTE. There is one more cook—outside—she is German——

MRS. DOOLITTLE. For goodness sake, send her in.

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CELESTE. Oui, Madame. (*Turning to L. door*) She is waiting! (*Exit L. a second*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Injured air*) It seems terrible, to be treated like this, when I am trying so hard to make people happy! Heaven knows, the world needs happiness these days!

(*Re-enter CELESTE, showing in GRETA, the German cook.*)

CELESTE. Her name is Greta, Madame. (*Retiring up to near window*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Wait, Celeste, I may need you.

GRETA. Good-morning. 'Snice house. (*Looking about*) You got it no cook? 'S too bad! You should like I come? Yes? (*Down c. beaming on MRS. DOOLITTLE*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Encouraged*) Indeed I should. You wouldn't mind a dinner party to-night—it is rather short notice—(*Regarding her anxiously*)

GRETA. I love dinner parties—when I live by Frau Schneider, I am making sometimes always dinner parties, and lunches in the afternoon, and by night time, such suppers! Ach! Yes?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Delighted*) You are just what I am looking for!

GRETA. Yah—everybody is looking for Germans—I am Gretchen Schlangenheimer—

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I think I'll call you Gretchen! What do you think about Hooverizing?

GRETA. Hooverize—vas is das? (*Looking puzzled*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I don't know exactly, only everyone seems to be doing it. It means, save food to help win the war.

GRETA. (*In disgust*) Nein, Nein—dat is not plenty—I should say—das is plenty—

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I hope you are not pro-German, Greta?

GRETA. (*Evasively*) I have nothing to do only, by your dinner party—I cook!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. You have really helped me wonderfully—you are engaged, Greta, and to-morrow, we will explain everything. Just now, Celeste will tell you about the arrangements for to-night! (*Turning to R. door*) Dear me, how relieved I am! Celeste, you explain to this good girl! I am quite exhausted! (*Exit R.*)

(CELESTE *advances down to L. of C.* GRETA *R. C. turns and looks at her.*)

GRETA. So, French?

CELESTE. You are German! (*Looking at her steadily*)

GRETA. You have a nice place here, yet. (*Looking about in vulgar curiosity*) What business is he in, the mans? (*To R. of table*)

CELESTE. Monsieur Doolittle is very rich——

GRETA. So? I like dat! It is much of everything I mean, you eat?

CELESTE. Yes, food—zey do not save here—I am sorree! (*Sighing*)

GRETA. Ach, I like dat! Everybody should have so much to eat—he grow fat—plenty meat, plenty bread, plenty sugar!

CELESTE. Ze other people zey have not so much!

GRETA. For why should we care? (*Shrugging her shoulders*)

CELESTE. Ze law say we must save, and, I tell Madame, but she like big party—what can I do?

GRETA. You do nothing, like it is a good girl. (*Patting CELESTE on the shoulder. CELESTE draws away*) Why you save for?

CELESTE. For the people of France, for Belgium, and for the soldiers!

GRETA. (*Impatiently*) Ach! What for soldiers? I t'ink not so much should go to England.

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CELESTE. Oh! Zat is wrong! If Euorpe have not ze food, ze munition, ze soldier, what become of United States?

GRETA. (*Harshly*) Germany will take care of United States! (*Laugh*) You t'ink so?

CELESTE. Germany hates the United States, because it is big, so, Germany make ship go down with food, and little children——

GRETA. (*Frowning*) It is not so! Last place where I come from, I show them how to get plenty to eat—Every place where I live, I show—I know—(*Cunning laugh*) I am smart, like Germany! (*Laughing as she turns up to window c. looking out*)

CELESTE. (*Looking after her*) Are you not anxious to save, to make sacrifices?

GRETA. (*Turning sharply*) For what?

CELESTE. To win ze war! (*Up to near window, L. of GRETA*)

GRETA. (*Harshly*) I should make of myself hungry? Nein, I eat so much—und, if Mr. Doo-little want I should, I know German dealers what give him everything what he want! (*Looking from window*)

CELESTE. (*Looking away from GRETA*) I understand—you break law—you no obey what President say, what Monsieur Hoover say——

GRETA. (*Sharp*) I eat, das is what I do—I have no more to do with Presidents——

CELESTE. (*Nervously*) Oh! What shall I do! (*Glancing at GRETA fearfully*) She is wicked—I mus' telephone—(*Advancing a step toward telephone*)

GRETA. (*Turning sharply*) What for you telephone?

CELESTE. (*Pausing, nervously*) About ze--ze confectionaire——

GRETA. (*Looking from window*) Look! What

is does womans? (*Looking from window in alarm*)

(CELESTE runs quickly to the window and looks out.)

CELESTE. Ze policewomen!

GRETA. Police! For what they look here? (*Turning from window*) Mebbe I not stay to-night. (*Down R., back of table*)

CELESTE. (*Advancing hastily, a step*) You promise Madame, I tell you about le dinner—

GRETA. It will be der big party? Mebbe I stay und make der eatings.

CELESTE. It is ordered—enough to feed so many hungry people! But, Madame, she love ze big party! (*Sighing*)

(*Enter MRS. DOOLITTLE from R., in nervous excitement.*)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Celeste, where are you, Oh, my dear, I am so frightened!

CELESTE. (*Alarmed*) Madame!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Advances to C., up-stage*) There are two policewomen coming upstairs—they insist upon seeing the German woman who came to cook for us.

(*Enter from R., briskly, MRS. THOROUGHLY and MRS. SHORTLY, Policewomen. In full uniform, with clubs. They stop in military fashion—at each side of the R. entrance, the other women regarding them in amazement and GRETA, in alarm.*)

GRETA. Policewomen! I t'ink I go, yet! (*Turning a step to L.*)

CELESTE. (*Quickly intercepting her*) No, you stay!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*To Policewomen*) Ladies, what have you come for?

MRS. SHORTLY. Sorry to alarm you, Mrs. Doolittle; we have been shadowing this woman, and I reckon she is not much surprised to see us. (*Look-steadily at GRETA*)

GRETA. (*Angrily*) I know you not—I go! (*Advancing a step*)

MRS. SHORTLY. You will go with us——

GRETA. Nein—I go by myself——

MRS. SHORTLY. Better take it quietly, Gretchen!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Where are you taking her?

MRS. THOROUGHLY. To the station-house!

(GRETA *alarmed*; MRS. DOOLITTLE *astonished*.)

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Station-house!

MRS. SHORTLY. (*To GRETA*) You are under arrest!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Good gracious! What for?

MRS. THOROUGHLY. Violation of the food law—she is engaged in German service—We have been following her, from place to place, where she stays long enough to induce disloyal persons to hoard supplies and buy in excess of governmental allowance!

GRETA. (*Snappishly, in anger*) It is not so—I have only something to eat—no more.

CELESTE. It is so—she talk like enemy—just now!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Celeste! How terrible!

MRS. THOROUGHLY. Come along, Germany! (*Beckoning GRETA as she exits R.*)

GRETA. I will not go!

MRS. SHORTLY. Oh, yes, you will! (*Advancing a step, flourishing her club in business-like manner*) Step lively!

(GRETA *marches briskly forward to R.*)

GRETA. (*In rage*) Ach! America—so! (*Snap-*

ping her fingers) Arrest me, good citizen, because I eat! In the morning, you shoot me. So, I am hero, in history, in newspapers! I care not—it is for Germany, and you see what we do when we capture United States!

(The others laugh in ridicule, as GRETA stalks out R. between Policewomen.)

CELESTE. Vive le United States!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. I don't understand how it happened?

MRS. SHORTLY. *(In doorway)* It happened, Madam, because there are women who will not conserve during these hard times; if they will not help willingly, the law can reach them. They Hooverize, or they go to jail! Good-morning! *(Exit briskly R.)*

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Oh, Celeste, it seems that fate is against us! *(Down to R. of table)*

(Enter SING YOUNG, in full Chinese costume.)

SING YOUNG. *(Coming in L.)* Hello, eblybody! *(Smiling at MRS. DOOLITTLE)*

MRS. DOOLITTLE. *(Astonished)* A Chinaman! Celeste! what is he doing here—the laundry is downstairs!

CELESTE. *(L., near table)* Madame, he is cook!

SING YOUNG. Me Sing Young. Cookee dinnee all same. Kitchen?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Oh, it's enough to give one palpitation! And of course I am grateful! But do you understand? After all that has happened, I admit, we must Hooverize.

SING YOUNG. Me Hoobelize allee timee—one way we win such big fight!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Even the Chinaman understands it!

SING YOUNG. Understandee all timee. Go Mission, learn pray—(*Clasping his hands*) Likee hear me pray, lady!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Cordially*) Indeed I would Sing Young—I seem to be learning from all the strange people who have come to my house this morning.

SING YOUNG. I say hymn. Little dlops o' water, littlee glains o' sand—makee mightee ocean, and makee pleasantee deed of kindness, littlee word o' love, make him world one heaven, allee same One above! (*Explaining*) That mean, I think lady, allee little bit. He helplee whole lot! (*Pointing upward*) I cookee dinner, make 'em eblybody feel happy. Fliend come bye and bye, eat vely good dinner—no makee too much, only plenty—bye and bye, feel strong, no dlink—no headache. (*Hand to his head*) Thanksgiving, thankee for you countly, my countly—American, eblybody countly!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. Oh, Celeste, the idea of a Chinese cook, is perfectly splendid! (*To SING YOUNG*) I shall be glad to have you stay!

SING YOUNG. Me thankee. Me cookee Hover! (*To R. of table*)

CELESTE. (*Looking off L.*) Here is another cook, Madame!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Down R.*) Heavens! Have they sent me every cook in town?

(*Enter from L., MIRANDA STONEWALL JACKSON, a jolly darky woman.*)

MIRANDA. 'Scuse me folks, how is you all? I'se Miranda Stonewall Jackson, and I'se gwine to help out fo' yo' dinner party! Laws! I'se cooked fo' quality, I has! 'Deed I has! (*Laughing*)

SING YOUNG. Me cookee! me cookee!

MIRANDA. (*Advancing to L. C. eyeing SING*

YOUNG *threateningly*) Who's dat? Chinaesser! Fo' lan' sakes! Whar did dat come from?

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Hastily*) It is very kind of you to come, Miranda, of course I'm delighted, but—

MIRANDA. Don't yo' go fo' 'poligizin' Misses. I'se goin' to get the vegetables, and the mince meat, and I knows how to Hobelize! Don't yo' worry 'bout nothin' Misses! Why look o' here—down South whar I done come from in Katuck, I was teachèd one thing—I was teachèd to be patient, an' polite, an' never' to waste nothing, not even a pin!

CELESTE. That is what we should do, Madame, pardon—if we have ze party, only so liddle—

MIRANDA. (*To CELESTE*) Das right, honey—I reckon you come from somewhar's near-about my home?

CELESTE. No, from France!

MIRANDA. France! I heered 'bout that place—de dog-gone Germans done bust it all up—das why we Hobelize—so's dem poo' folks ober whar you come from—(*Indicate CELESTE*) dey all can get somethin' to eat!

SING YOUNG. (*Delighted*) Me cokee, me cokee, vely little—vely little—

MIRANDA. (*Glaring at SING YOUNG*) Yo' hol' yo' tongue, Chinese—don't yo' int'rupt when I'se talkin'! I make some cookie and some doughnuts fo' you white folks—an' I puts lot ob jam on 'em--an' you don't nev' need no butter, and no wheat! No, Missus, I don't nev' 'low wheat!

MRS. DOOLITTLE. (*Advancing to c.*) Thank you, Miranda, and you, Sing Young, you have taught me my duty—dear little Celeste, too. With such loyal hearts to guide me, I shall be able to do my share. There are stormy days ahead—

MIRANDA. 'Deed honey there is—we'se got to be awful savin'—'tain't no joke, I'se tellin' you—

CELESTE. So, Madame, I am so glad—it will help ze poor, and ze soldiers.

MRS. DOOLITTLE. We must help; we will give our dinner party, but we will Hooverize everything, and with Sing Young's permission, I will change his poetry a little—(*Stepping forward, addressing audience*)

Little grains of sugar
Flour with bounteous hand
For our gallant soldiers
In a foreign land.
A billion deeds of kindness
A billion words of love,
For each brave boy a token,
For those He guards above!

Curtain.

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